

INTEGRITY

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Vol.3, No.9

SUBJECT~THE APOSTOLATE

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INTEGRITY IS INDEXED IN THE CATHOLIC PERIODICAL INDEX.

EDITORIAL



ETER MAURIN died at eleven o'clock in the evening of May 15, 1949, which is the feast of Saint John Baptist de la Salle. Mr. Maurin was well known in apostolic circles for his many gifts, prominent among which was his holiness. It was evident to those who attended his wake at 115 Mott Street, and his Requiem Mass at the Church of the Transfiguration in Chinatown, that he had died a man of great prosperity and distinction. His prosperity lay in his securing abundantly all of the things necessary for happiness, while being shorn clean of the stuff that thieves steal and moths consume. His claim to distinction lay in the fact that he was a Christian and that's about all.

As a prominent Catholic layman he toured the country many times. He was select in his choice of traveling companions, accepting only those thieves and publicans who were willing to listen to his story about the kingdom of heaven and its justice. He usually traveled third-class, or as it is conventionally described hitch-hiking. Yet he quite willingly left his beloved brethren on many an occasion to speak to collegiate intellectuals or women's groups. Audiences always found his talks exciting, which is surprising inasmuch as his subject was inevitably Christianity.

His degrees were few, preferring as he did to master situations rather than subjects. He could fire a boiler quite well or grade a road. He had the hands of a true student, knobbed and calloused. He studied both here and abroad, and he discovered that working conditions, human nature and the efficacy of grace were pretty much the same the world over.

In spite of his preoccupation with practical problems, Mr. Maurin was not above washing his hands and reading a book or two. Perhaps this is what made him rejoice in the one degree he had earned, an M.A. The initials stood for Master Agitator. It was a simple turn of mind, after reading the letters of Pope Pius XII, Pius X, XI and XII addressed to such persons as him. He took them literally and became excited about them. This excitement he attempted, with success in more than one instance,

to communicate to others. If history goes in the right direction it is more than likely that Peter Maurin will be revered as father of the lay apostolate in America.

It is unnecessary to outline here the program of action which he was the principle proponent. He has bequeathed a treasure to the CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT and Dorothy Day who with him founded the movement in 1933. Over the space of the past thirty-three months INTEGRITY has been attempting to set down in broad outline and some detail the theme of Christian revolution which Mr. Maurin felt was so necessary. However, according to his own council, we are going about it "our own crazy way." By that he meant that each of us must become intoxicated with grace and make it effective within the time and limit of our talent and opportunity, for this is the desire of the Holy Ghost.

Mr. Maurin was a member in good standing of two prominent clubs: the Communion of Saints and the Mystical Body of Christ. He contributed to the treasury of the former from his vast earnings and more than one person has known the benefit of the merits he has bestowed. He had an old-world charm about him, the charm of a tradition steeped in Christ. Every member of the Mystical Body he met, regardless of whether he was in good standing or not, received a bountiful quota of Mr. Maurin's concern for the health and well-being of his soul.

Relatives and friends of the deceased, his brethren in Christ are asked to pray for the soul of Peter Maurin, M.A. May God bless this unhappy world with more such as he, for of such are the kingdom of heaven.

THE EDITORS



LET'S FACE IT

Out they come in droves and batches,
Pagan minds with Catholic patches.

Spiritual Birth-Control

Spiritual ills have a habit of breaking out like sores on the face of society. The kind of sores indicate not only the presence of spiritual disease but also its nature. For example, we have two types, one on the surface of society and the other beneath. The first is the stunted family, and the second is the lack of Christian heroic spirit. These bear a similarity one to the other which is not be immediately apparent, but, when realized, will help point out remedies.

Their first point in common is sterility. Two processes of growth are being frustrated, one in the natural order and the other in the supernatural order. The baptismal font, the womb of the Church, is being defrauded of souls, while at the same time the wombs of the wives are being defrauded of babies. Few parents grieve over the lives that are being denied. Few Catholics weep for the souls unconverted to grace. We are not giving God the co-creative help that He expects.

Generosity is the spirit that brings life into being and sustains it. Can we presume that this generosity is lacking in the parents who plan a dwarfed family or in the Catholics who are refused to let the Church remain a closed shop? An unqualified "No" would not be in order. In many cases planning parents and non-apostolic Catholics display a too obvious generosity toward their children they do have, or within the parochial boundaries, to the point that they are ungenerous. It is in reference to such persons as these that we can best investigate the twin maladies. The parish priest or parent who is completely selfish needs no explanation. The problem to be resolved is to interpret that kind of generosity which is limited, local, and cautious, the generosity which exhausts itself within a limited area. This may be generosity, but is it Christian generosity?

Christian Generosity

Scripture testifies to Christ's constant concern with the spiritual and corporal needs of the people He met. The thing that gives His generosity its distinctive character is His special and primary concern for those who needed Him most. He displayed this preference on many an occasion. To the scandal of the Pharisees and the wonderment of His followers he lavished His praise and attention upon the Roman centurion, the despised Samaritan, the doubting publican, the castigated prostitute. In explanation of this strange choice of intimates He said, "They that are whole need

not the Physician: but they that are sick. I come not to call just, but sinners to penance."

Zacheus, who was rich, could not get to Jesus because of crowd of poor that surrounded Him. Even His beloved mother witnessed His special generosity for strangers at the time when He remained behind to talk with the doctors in the temple, when He told the crowd that *they*, those who heard and did the will of God, were His mother and His brethren. It is in the Sermon on the Mount that we find the precise statement of this universal compassion and catholic generosity which is the distinctive feature of Christian charity. "If you love them that love you . . . if you do good to them who do good to you . . . if you lend to them of whom you hope to receive . . ., what thanks will you have to them? Sinners also do this. But love your enemies; do good to them and lend, hoping for nothing thereby: and your reward shall be great, and you shall be the sons of the Highest; for He is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil."

Christian charity over-leaps the immediate family, the neighborhood, the parish, and the nation, and reaches out to grasp the hands of strangers, outcasts and enemies. It is a distinctive kind of generosity, because it *could not proceed from natural affection*, it could not proceed from self-love; there is no hope of earthly reward or likelihood of gratitude. It is a love that could only be the natural expression of those who have in their veins the Blood of a King. Whose reign is universal and His beneficence catholic.

The distinction then is not between love and hate, but between a love confined and a love extended. Nor does this mean that the stranger is to be loved *instead of* the friend, but rather much as a fire that throws its heat far is most intense near its center, so too does Christian generosity embrace the friend with greater warmth because it is built high enough to shed its warmth to the uttermost limits of the crowd.

The relation between the love of friends and the love of strangers is displayed best in Our Lord's parable of the Good Shepherd. In this story he leaves behind the ninety-nine just to seek the one that is lost. In this brief summary of the distinctive feature of Christian generosity we find the cure for the disease that stunts the family and discourages apostolicity. Love that is not spread turns inward and consumes itself, and like all living seeds that are left in a pile it begins to

The Ungenerous Family

Where natural generosity is present, a dwarfed family and a lack of apostolicity indicate an in-breeding that destroys rather

n encourages life. It is a kind of "smother love." Generosity
s confined is bound to become self-conscious and will eventually

Let's take a look at today's truncated family and see in how
ny details it parallels a non-apostolic parochialism. The
ldren of such families fall into three categories: the unborn,
rebels, and the pampered pets. The unborn are very notice-
e by their absence. Banquo's chair at today's family feast is
igh chair. The unborn prescribe the mores of the family. They
the price of children's clothes in the luxury bracket. Had
y been born, fathers would have rebelled before this against
adequate houses and inadequate salaries. Their very absence
a mute testimony to the capitulation of the workers to the
istent demands of the industrialists' social-conscious wives that
y limit their families. The unborn prescribe the current atti-
e toward sex and toward the woman, for she is now an object
marily for pleasure and secondarily and reluctantly for mother-
od. The wives dress to fit their change in status while the
born and the unwanted look on. These quiet nobodies behind
Contraceptive Curtain, had they been freed, would have
olutionized the world. We have chosen progress rather than
geny. For every unborn child there is an equally intangible
osis which haunts the houses like so many ghosts. These are
unborn.

The rebels are the disobedient children, or, as the social
rkers veiledly phrase it, the "juvenile delinquents." Wander-
alone or in bands, these pitiful rebels defy the parent, the
ther, and the psychologist, because they have lost their trust
their elders. These are the children who, with that frightening
spicacity of innocence, have seen the void in the eyes of their
ents. In many cases their conception was received with wails
anguish. Mother had "got caught!" They were offered
sonalized attention and antiseptic hygiene instead of love.
eather they were fondled or abused, their innocence detected
ck of generosity. They had remained little strangers, intruders
he love-life of their parents. Though not all of so unpleasant
origin, that little world of children from which adults are
cluded has broadcasted a message of distrust. The adults were
spiring against childhood. So many of this new generation
e come into society as stowaways, it is no wonder we have such
d of alienists to find out who or what they really are.

The few that are left are the pampered pets. These receive
the affection and care which is denied to the unborn and the

rebels. On them is bestowed the lavish fruit of troubled consciences. In their behalf (or so it is pretended) the family remains empty. So that they may go to college, little Junior never be born. Where the rebel flees the parent, these wise ones snuggle close, demanding the birthright of the first-born. They are too shrewd to become prodigal.

The Ungenerous Parish

Within the self-enclosed parish we can see a spiritual condition that parallels the situation of the truncated family. We even devise the same categories. The parish, too, has its unborn rebels, and its pampered pets. These unborn souls, hungry consciously or unconsciously for grace, surround the Church like a huge sea whose surface has been unruffled by the passage of the Holy Ghost. Within the average parish practicing Catholics usually constitute but a small fraction of the entire population. Great masses of baptized Catholics do not go to church at all. Then beyond these are the non-Catholics (the unborn) who we hardly know of the existence of the Church were it not for an occasional piece in the daily paper. It is within this unconverted mass that the seeds of superstition, secularism, and communism are sown, and bit by bit the sea is inundating the narrow island of the faithful. When the terrible fact of this mass of directionless souls is accepted as mission country and placed as number one priority in parochial projects, the Faith will wax gloriously. Until that time the unborn will continue to give to the parish the appearance of a closed society for the elect.

Some may claim that to compare these souls unconverted to Christ with unborn babies is unfair in that many of them reject grace of conversion even when it is presented. This is partially true. Until such time, however, when the Faith is manifested in all its greatness (to the degree let us say, that the communists manifest communism), I think we might safely guess that a greater number of these souls remain in ignorance. After all, what efficacy are written testimonials of the Faith such as those made available to them in the newspapers or in pamphlets and periodicals if the lives of Catholics do not publicly resemble the ideals expressed. If, for example, the text speaks of trusting in God's Providence, and yet the tone of parochial thinking is not naturally prudent as that of the market place, what "outsiders" could know the Church for what it is? We cannot presume to know in what way grace is presented to souls, but the efficacious instrument throughout history has not been the letter of the Gospel, but the virtue *lived out*. The Bible is still a best se-

it alone cannot and does not effect a quantity of conversions the Christ-life. What the Church needs today is not apologists and witnesses.

Who are the rebels? These are the fallen away and the fallen away who have been scandalized by the elect. Immature in faith, they failed to see virtue in those that should have been their parents. To keep my analogy straight, I should like to point out that by "parents" I mean god-parents in the broad sense. Those who are strong in faith are the channels of spiritual nourishment to those who are weak. Saint Paul spoke of being a mother in Christ toward those whom he would bring to the Faith. Spiritually speaking, those who are strong in faith have practiced planned parenthood, limiting their generosity to a mutual admiration for other just ones, and the rebellious sinners are left parentless. Thus they have turned to the communists for faith, to the psychiatrists for hope, and the Salvation Army for charity. Whether their needs were spiritual or corporal they saw no exhibition of Christian generosity to assure them that Christ is the source of their temporal and eternal beatitude. Among the faithful themselves they saw dire need occupying the same pew with affluence. They had seen those who sin publicly ostracized from the company of those who sin only privately. They had seen Catholic landlords reject large families or close their flats to Negroes or Jews. They had seen Catholic tenants ruin the property of landlords and refuse to live among others than those of their own nationality. They had seen men fired for union activities by Catholic employers, or black-balled by their fellow Catholic workers. One can hardly expect them to love Christ Whom they cannot see when they find it impossible to love so many Catholics whom they can see. These are the rebels.

Then we have the pampered pets. These are the few who manifest the Faith to the many. So often their lack of concern for strange souls implies that Christianity is for the elect and they are it." Funneled into these souls are all the traditions, customs, sings, instructions, and graces of the Faith, channeled down through the Martyrs, the Saints, and the Sacraments. Neither a nor tittle of the status quo will pass away until they pass away. The loyal organist prescribes the sentimental music for the parish, Pius X. This daily communicant sets the tone of the parish society, not Saint Vincent de Paul. This member of the matrons' club scatters her doilies and posies in lieu of Saint Teresa's many roses. A Saint Paul in the pulpit or a Saint Peter in the Young Men's Name Society would upset the righteous calm of the "regu-

lars." These people quite unwittingly, and by no means viciously, have taken the skein of the Faith and woven a lace curtain behind which the poor carpenter of Nazareth is imprisoned from his own. This lace curtain is so gossamer, so clean, so pretty, and so expensive-looking, that the sinner, the common, the vulgar, dare not dare push it aside. These pampered pets are not without virtue, and they may be as saintly as they appear, but their delicacy of manner cramps their generosity toward those who need it most.

The Apostolate

Catholic Action to be effective requires a shakeup in the parochial structure. Nothing that is sacred will be touched, only the trimmings will be done over. The focal spot of all attention should be upon the unborn. The Pope has made this a top priority. And who will make contact with them? This, I believe, is the divine mission of the rebels. The faith of the rebels will be strengthened once they become channels of Christian generosity to others. They can understand the coarseness and obtuseness of those who have not known the Faith. The rebels have the fire and enthusiasm to become leaders. Their impatience can become a holy impatience for souls. Those of us who hope to survive the general judgment should be willing to listen and face up to the judgment of the rebels. Their judgments will be no sterner than those of the Son of Justice. Once permitted to air their gripes and once given an apostolic job to do, in many cases their rebellion will cease and their misdirected energies will become a new rhythmic impetus behind an effective apostolate.

As for the pampered pets—are not these the just? And, if not just, are they not already saved? Perhaps we can't be sure. We should be able at least to call their bluff, because the Popes, the Saints, the Doctors, and Our Lord, all of these whom they hold sacred can be marshalled behind the arguments for an apostolate. It is very likely that their devotion will actually be greater when the pews are cramped with the newly-delivered, than it is now with all that elbow room.

ED WILLOCK

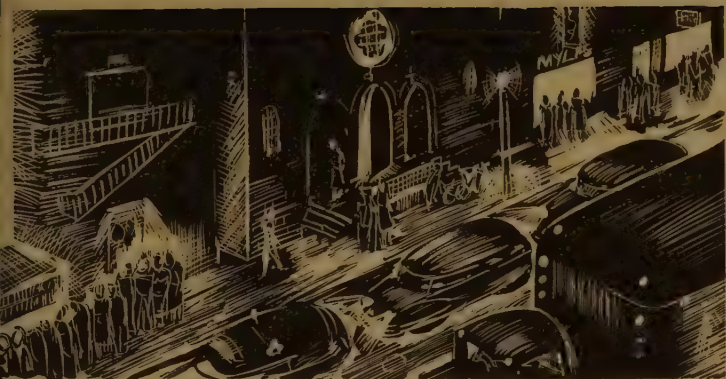
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

A child has fallen in a well,

We dig for her in haste.

A soul is falling into Hell.

We haven't time to waste.



"Revolution in a City Parish"

In 1940 Abbe Michonneau became pastor of a working-class parish in Colombes, a suburb of Paris. Because of his success in winning a living, apostolic parish, he was urged to set down his thoughts in writing, and was given as his collaborator Father Chery of the Dominican Order. To keep the direct style of the conversations between these two priests which were the origin of the book, Revolution in a City Parish was written in dialogue form. Published in France in 1945, it had an illuminating introduction by His Eminence Cardinal Suhard who gave it his unqualified support. Because of the widespread influence the book had among French priests, an English translation was made by a group of American seminarians. It has recently been published in England with an enthusiastic foreward by His Excellency Archbishop of Boston (Published by Blackfriars, Oxford, England; 7s 6d).

Because the book is of immense value for priests in this country who, with all the good will in the world, sometimes are confused as to where to begin in the tremendous task of transforming their parishes, it seems good to apply Abbe Michonneau's teachings to the Church in America.

The Concept of a Mission Parish

While *Revolution in a City Parish* is an account of results achieved, it is much more than that; for, as Abbe Michonneau is first to admit, his objective as yet has not been attained. His book is a statement of the principles—not in the abstract, but as they have been lived—to be used in the tremendous task of making Christ a reality in the pagan world. For that is a fact he insists upon (in entire agreement with the late Abbe Godin, author of

the book *France, a Mission Country?*): that the mass of people today are pagan, that Christianity is something alien to them, and that the Gospel has little bearing on the lives of even those who do attend church services. Abbe Michonneau's parish is made up predominantly of workers, only five per cent of whom are practising Catholics. It is his contention that as their pastor he is responsible for all who are in the confines of his parish, that he and his curates cannot limit their ministry to preserving the faith of the five per cent, but that it is their mission to re-Christianize the mass of people. He does not advocate neglecting the faithful, although he has Christ's own example to justify leaving the ninety-nine sheep for the lost one. As added impetus to such a course of action he has the knowledge that the numbers are nearly reversed (the ninety-nine outside the fold), and that the pathetic few inside the fold will soon be lost if the community which they live in is left pagan. Consequently he views his parish as a *mission* parish which must be a conquering force for Christianity in pagan territory, rather than as a *conservative* parish which must simply sustain the faith of those already Christian. The faithful must be made aware of their responsibility as Christians to be apostolic, that theirs is the task of making Christ live in the temporal order and of forming a genuine Christian community. This can only be done by teamwork. The nucleus of the team is the pastor with his curates, but the team must grow to include lay apostles, and not only those in specialized movements but every member of the parish. The cooperation of all is needed not only to convert individuals but to transform the mass.

Abbe Michonneau stresses the fact that he is not giving a blueprint for every parish. Rather he is writing in the spirit which animates the head of a family when he says, "This was good for my family but maybe it won't work in yours." I can see how many things he says would have to be re-applied to the parish in which I live on the outskirts of the city. It is predominantly bourgeois, not working class. A good proportion of the people own their own homes, and the majority of people in the neighborhood are Catholic. (One of the boasts you hear is that there are enough non-Catholic children to keep the public school going.) Church services are crowded, daily communicants many. And yet in a way the evil is more insidious. It is true there are a number of families with a wholesome, healthy life, but we are not noted for apostolic zeal, or living Christian virtue. There is no noticeable influence on non-Catholics. We are a Christian community only in the sense that Jews are practically absent from among us. V

the same modern materialistic standards as the rest of the world and, the sad part of it is, we don't realize the danger. There are no blatantly sinful conditions prodding us on to be apostolic.

But there are many parishes in the large cities which resemble Abbe Michonneau's parish to a greater degree. The people in these parishes are not living in physical conditions conducive to family life or personal development. Since the population is large there is no way the pastor can know his flock by name or obtain vital information about them. Individuals are lost in the crowd, and the crowd is undeniably pagan in its standards, values and reactions. Christianity has no hold on the people. It does not penetrate their lives. To the minority who do go to church the sermons are unrealistic, the Mass fantastic. Frequently as the people view Christianity in the churches it simply repels them. Abbe Michonneau says there are many reasons for this: one is that the priests are not one with their people, they don't understand the conditions under which they labor, the dangers to which they are exposed. The priest is alien to them as they are alien to the priest. They think of him as someone who has a soft life. They find them rough, crude, unappreciative, "impossible."

I myself was once in a Puerto Rican parish in the city, working on a case as a social worker, and I decided to stop in to see the parish priest to enlist his aid in helping a particular family. He laughed at my plans (for which I don't blame him as they probably were impractical) and assured me that there was no use trying to do anything about the people there. He talked freely about the people. (We were of the same racial background; I had a college education and the same culture as he. I thought of him when I was reading Abbe Michonneau's chapter on "Clerical Culture" and how priests too often let themselves slip into middle class surroundings, and associate, not with those who need them most, but with those whom they find naturally congenial.) The Latin ways of the parishioners repelled him. I ventured a word about the unbearably inhuman conditions in which they lived, trying to defend them for what he felt was their complete lack of morality. He told me that I'd get over trying to do something for them; he had forgotten them and now I'm happy." It was obvious that he wasn't. For a priest is happy only when he is being a father to his people.

The saddest thing for a Christian is to see a priest who has lost his zeal. It is as if our Christ suddenly forgot that He had come to save that which was lost.

Social Activities for Adults

For many zealous priests who are working to bring Christ to a pagan parish against insuperable odds, Abbe Michonneau's suggestions on using the "direct" apostolate are of immense value. While he does not discount completely the value of church societies, sports, educational activities, and the like, he feels that much time and effort is spent on them and that they hinder a priest from his primary duty of preaching the Gospel and directly reaching his people. The adult societies have little influence on the majority of practicing Catholics in a parish, let alone on those who are outside the Church. I have noticed in this country at least that they are joined by a small group of "pillars of the Church" who live up to their religious duties anyway. The fact that this is so would justify their existence if they made this group militant Catholics. Certainly a priest who spent his time in the formation of a strong group of apostles who would then penetrate and transform their environment would be wise. But most of the societies have as activities bridge parties, bus rides, and smoke parties. They amuse their members, but they don't make them vigorous Christians.

Sports

The youth activities of the Church seem just as unsuccessful. People may say that they keep children off the streets, but so do the public school playgrounds, park groups, the Y.M.C.A. and the P.A.L. Furthermore, as Abbe Michonneau says, "we cannot hope to compete with any secular force in the field of recreation. It can offer attractions which are completely beyond us." He goes on to say that to be logical if we insist that the young must have all their recreation under our supervision, "If they go to swimming-pool, does that mean that *we* shall have to install a pool? If they go off for winter sports, does that mean that we must find a Catholic mountain?"

It may be argued, however, that through membership in the Children of Mary bowling team or the Sacred Heart "Big Five" someone may come in contact with a priest and profit by his zeal. Abbe Michonneau answers: "True enough, these teams do provide fine opportunities for individual spiritual instruction. What we are saying is that there is a disproportion between the results and the effort involved in attaining it, especially since that effort could have been used elsewhere. Take the picture as a whole, and you will see that nothing is accomplished for the community. Neither faith nor morals are appreciably bettered; Mass is no better attended; the sense of what it means to be a Catholic is not a

ner." I myself have observed that winning the track meet and winning the basketball championship often become the ultimate goal. The Catholic auspices are incidental. Unfortunately, in many parishes the few good athletes get all the attention as they bring honor to the parish, and the majority of young people remain untouched by the activity which is more sectarian than genuinely Christian anyway.

Socials for Young People

In no activities is this more evident than in the socials for young people. Theoretically these aim to provide opportunity for boys and fellows to get to know one another with a view to Christian marriage. Practically there is nothing Christian about them. There is generally (at least in the city parishes I know) no spirit of friendliness; the same evils of the modern world are brought into them. They are another headache for the priests. Perhaps that is why the priests sometimes stay away from them and they are left unchaperoned. You hear mothers complain at how their daughters were subjected to at the parish dance, that it isn't the duty of providing recreation for the children, and that the young people meet prospective mates, primarily from their family's? That is Abbe Michonneau's point: that adults must be made aware of their responsibility to their children, not have their problems solved by being relieved of them. He contends that it is not the function of the priest to be a coach, play director, and so on, but it is his function through direct contact to preach Christ to his people and to make them solid, ardent Christians capable of restoring the temporal order which is their direct responsibility, not the priests.

Abbe Michonneau's Solution

Then the question arises, "Are we to abandon our young people to the evil influences around us?" Abbe Michonneau replies, of course not. It seems to us that, instead of trying to organize and reorganize, it would be more sensible to Christianize what already exists. Secular organizations are not our business, and neither is their administration. On the other hand, it *is* our business to try to fill individuals and organizations with a Christian spirit. That opens up a tremendous field to us and it is a field where our temporal resources, or lack of them, will not be a constant problem."

Certainly we don't advocate that all church activities be wiped out, but, as Abbe Michonneau suggests, why can't they be taken over by lay apostolic groups? The Young Christian Workers could work out a particular activity in response to an inquiry on recreation. The married women's Catholic Action would provide

services to meet the problems of their environment. Such activities would be the outcome of needs the people themselves realize. They would be directed by militant lay people who would be interested in having everyone in the whole community profit from them, not just the church membership. The priest's task, according to the Abbe, is "to encourage them (such activities), keep an eye on them, but never to be himself the artificial cause of their existence."

Parochial Education

Abbe Michonneau thinks that the products of parochial education are lacking in burning desire to transform society. I think in all justice we have to agree with him. The graduates of our parish elementary and high schools are somehow swallowed up in the mass. Intended to be the yeast, they are stagnant. Intended to be leaders, they go the way of everyone else. One late pastor who had devoted many years to building up an excellent school, complained once to me that after all his efforts our graduates had no influence on society. Given the best the Church has to offer, they were apathetic, selfish, half-souled Christians.

The Abbe says that our youth "are not haunted by the vision of a rejected Christ because they do not realize, concretely, that He is rejected." They take the treasures of the Faith for granted; they are taught to be concerned for their own salvation, but not for those outside the Church. In our parish the children throw stones at the Protestant Church, but they were not given an apostolic zeal to replace their sectarian energy.

Unfortunately, the children often get the impression that going to the nine o'clock children's Mass is more important than going to Mass. Our graduates often seem to know more of accidental rules than the Christian spirit. This was brought home to me vividly through my friendship with a girl who had had Catholic education, but was away from the Church and living in adultery. She didn't think much of missing Sunday Mass, but was shocked at me when I suggested dropping into Church where both of us were minus hats. "Why the nuns in school would never allow that."

One reason for the failures of Catholic schools which the Abbe does not mention is the fact that in this country we are sometimes so busy competing with the public schools and proving that we are better than they in every way that we fail in our main objective. For if the chief purpose of a Catholic school is to be better scholastically than a public one, why not make the public school better and be done with it? If we are too busy telling the

children how to be a success in the world we should not be surprised if the children get the impression that the world is a pretty place, and that there is no urgency to transform it.

But Abbe Michonneau's chief point is that we have placed over-emphasis on education in the parish. For years we have maintained that if we transformed the children through education the next generation would be Christian, and this has failed to open. The reason is apparent. The family is the main influence on the children. You can tire yourself trying to instill principles of social justice and the spirit of poverty into a wealthy child, but if she remains in a money-mad environment your efforts are most likely futile. Unless the adults are reached, unless the parents become full of the Christian spirit, our work with the children is fruitless. Consequently, the Abbe maintains that the priests should make every effort to evangelize the adults, to prepare young couples for marriage (in this country through Cana and Cana conferences), and to form lay leaders of a strong Christian family movement. Militant families will do more to transform society than the best equipped, best staffed Catholic school.

Direct Apostolate

Freeing priests from their pre-occupation with innumerable activities gives them time for the apostolate for which they were ordained. As Abbe Michonneau says, "We simply cannot do everything, and if, as we have found, the direct apostolate brings more souls than we can satisfy and guide—then it certainly is possible for us to give time to anything less immediately apostolic." He goes on to say that the priest must make Christ visible in his flesh. He must be in evidence throughout the parish not hesitating to greet his parishioners, Catholic or not, on the street, or stopping to chat with them in their door-ways. He must know them, to understand their jobs, to realize their particular problems. A priest reaches his people not by becoming the same as they, for they rightly expect him to be different. But according to the Abbe that difference must come from the fact that he is the especially chosen of God, not from the fact that he is different in culture, education and etiquette. (Certainly he must have more education than they, for he must know the truth. Not knowing the truth won't be an obstacle to him, but lack of humility and lack of charity will.) If a priest loves his people enough he will be entirely theirs. They will be familiar with him—not in the vulgar sense, but as members of the family of which he is the father.

It is unfortunately true that most people shy away from direct contact with priests. I know as children we dreaded meeting a priest on the street because we were afraid we wouldn't greet him properly. Even now I shake when I ring a rectory door bell. Many people have complained of a chilly reception at the rectory. I know a non-Catholic who was interested in taking instruction who phoned the rectory three times to talk to a priest, and was told by the housekeeper each time that no one was available. Another girl went to a rectory and overheard the priest say to the receptionist that she should tell the visitor to come back "some other time." Unfortunately people don't come back, and these petty scandals alienate many for good. Someone who had had a problem for years finally told it to a priest, and when a friend questioned what that particular priest had to inspire confidence in, he could think of nothing remarkable about him only "that he was the first priest who ever asked me about myself." As Abbe Michonneau says: "A priest who is awake can find many opportunities for the direct apostolate provided he is willing to 'waste' time with people who are half-way willing to talk to him. He can be a brusque official or he can be a priest. One thing I remember is that all our efforts will fail unless we are kind and sympathetic. We may have grandiose and clever ideas about liturgical revivals, about sermons, about all sorts of activities—but they are as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Unless we are loved by the people we are trying to win, and unless we love them, we shall most certainly fail."

Abbe Michonneau holds that systematic visits to every home in the parish should be the important part of the ministry of the priest. Too many people now feel that priests visit only the wealthier homes where they are entertained socially. Visiting every home in a large city parish is a gigantic task, but it is one the Abbe says can be done if there is self-sacrifice and teamwork on the part of priests. One personal contact with a priest is worth a multitude of public sermons and endless club activities. I myself have always thought when I heard priests say that they couldn't visit homes, and that the Legion of Mary should do all the visiting because they would be better received, that they were wrong. Perhaps a priest would receive insults, rebuffs, coldness at first, but those are what Christ received. Because Saint Paul was blazing with love, he never hesitated to speak to pagans wherever he met them. The Abbe maintains that ardent charity, not a particular gift, is necessary. People may not like priests, or they may be indifferent towards them, but, in this country at least

priest is considered a person of position. People might not be averted immediately, but they would not be unmoved if a priest climbed to their fifth floor tenement to visit them.

Here is the method of visiting used in the parish at Colombes. The parish was divided into sections, each under the care of a priest. At first the priests went around ringing the doorbells as they came. This didn't prove too successful, and it was decided to use the information given by lay apostles (and here the Legion of Mary would be of definite help) about the different families in their neighborhood, so that the priest knew a little about the family he was visiting. Then too, militant Catholics were encouraged to invite their neighbors in, and the priest would come. Discussions on religion waxed well, and such home meetings proved an excellent way of reaching unbelievers.

I agree whole-heartedly with the Abbe when he says that he believes people expect priests to talk about religion, and are scandalized when they don't. I have heard indifferent Catholics and non-Catholics remark disgustedly that a priest is worldly, precisely when he is putting on a "regular guy" act for their benefit. A priest should know how to make small talk, be interested in Daddy's new job and the baby's new tooth, but his conversation must rise from there.

Our hearts should go out to those priests who are so tied up with chance books, bazaars, baseball teams and bridges, that they don't get a chance to take Christ to Christless souls, or give adequate spiritual guidance in the confessional to eager Christians.

"The Clink of Money"

And talking about the multitudinous activities, I should mention here that one of the chief arguments against them is the amount of money they entail. The direct apostolate takes little (that's why Saint Paul could live so cheaply) but gyms, halls, and equipment take a great deal. I was happy to see that Abbe Chonneau, in the chapter "The Clink of Money Round the Year," doesn't hesitate to treat of the accusation that the Church is money-mad. I am delighted to be able to quote him: "We lay apostles will be able to use this text as undeniable evidence that priests want to change the financial set-up, even to the extent of suppressing sources of revenue, so that they may be more efficient spiritual servants." For a long time I used to answer the accusations of people that the priests had a racket, by defending the collections, by telling all the good purposes for which the money was used, or by saying that the people who were objecting were doing so to justify their own lack of generosity. But you

can see their point. When you hear young couples with little money being told to trust in Providence and go ahead and have babies, you wonder why the parish doesn't set the example of trust, instead of devoting the entire sermon to the money it must have. If money is not supposed to be the absorption of parents of flesh-and-blood children, why should it seem the main preoccupation of the Church, the mother of spiritual children?

For years my father has refused to pay seat money, arguing that as a child of God he refused to pay admission to his Father's House. Of course the faithful should give willingly to the upkeep of their church, as they would for their own home, but how can they feel the church is theirs when they see signs, "25¢ seat money at the later Masses," or, in pews, little name cards with the inscription that renting a pew is a sign of dependability of which the renter should be proud? Pride isn't a Christian virtue, and being able to have a pew might mean merely that you're rich, not necessarily a better Christian.

The more a priest gave his time to the formation of genuine, great-hearted Christians, the less he would have to worry about money. Witness among lay apostles their generosity to one another, the willingness with which they give money to the cause of Christ. Abbe Michonneau says it is wrong if people get the impression that money is of primary importance in the spread of the kingdom. The collection at the Offertory, he insists, is part of the liturgy and should be kept as such, and not prolonged throughout the Mass. He further recommends eliminating class distinctions at weddings and funerals. Certainly it is heartening if you note that the first thing the priest mentions when you come to arrange for a wedding is the money involved. Too often the only thing a non-Catholic husband understands about the funeral Mass of his Catholic wife is the amount of money it will cost. (Abbe Michonneau describes funerals that would be a source of inspiration and grace for the many outsiders generally present at such occasions, where the whole congregation would participate in the Mass, and there would be true communal worship—not an occasion of mystification to non-Catholics and boredom to Catholics. I regret that I don't have the opportunity to say more about his suggestions for a living, apostolic liturgy.)

The laity themselves often seem to want the clink of money around the altar. Sometimes if we get a little more money than our neighbors we expect special privileges and get annoyed if a ten-dollar contribution isn't acknowledged more gratefully than their five dollars.

By the Providence of God, I have never been destitute, but I know how the poor felt once when a priest took up a collection and I had no money to put in it. Another time I was in a city in a parish which was located on the borders of a wealthy neighborhood, but was made up predominantly of poor people. There was a Negro section in the parish, and the people there had shanty store churches which they had established, testifying to their yearning for some kind of religion. There were factories in the parish, and the community was unattractive in its physical make-up. There were also furnished-room transients and a block of Japanese. In one edge of the parish flourished the city's "red light" district. I went to Mass one day and the priest started to speak. He was asking for money to build a new school and the chief reason he gave to his parishioners to win their support was that "it would improve property values." I thought of the people with ruined lives, the prostitutes, the many in mortal sin, the unwanted Negroes (whom he was implying should be kept out of the neighborhood)—and he was worrying about property values! Because God gave me grace I didn't get up and walk out, but all I could do was wonder how the miserable people who knowingly yearn for God could be made to come into a church for that. And yet that was Our Lord's command: "To compel men to come in."

The Ideal of the Priesthood

Abbe Michonneau has written inspiring pages on the spirituality of modern priests, and how their apostolate and spiritual life must be one; for they will be made saints by their ministry. Going to God for their people at Mass, they return laden with graces for the whole parish. The priest is a man who is *consumed*, wholly given over to the glory of God and the service of every child of God. It is difficult for a lay person to write of the sublimity of the priesthood, the greatness of which we can only grasp in retrospect. The fact that the priest has the powers of Christ, can bring Christ to us, and give us back to Christ, is so amazing that it is almost unbelievable.

It is for the laity to help priests with their prayers, their cooperation, their love. If there is one thing I got out of Abbe Michonneau's book, it is this (and this despite his criticism of priests, a criticism however which is always constructive, always based on love of great charity)—an impression of the glory of the priesthood, and the wonder of a shepherd who being another Christ gives his life for his sheep.

ELIZABETH WILLIAMS



LATER ON

We'll fix the fold that holds the Just,

And never count the cost,

And after that, with what is left,

We'll hunt the sheep that's lost.

The Two Enemies of the Church

One hears of a prophecy that in our day the Church will be attacked by two great enemies: one from outside and one from within. If so, the prophecy is accurate. We do have two great enemies today: one of them is external and comprises the haters of Christ; the other is more subtle, it is the apathy that has descended on Christ's followers. The camp of the external enemy is in the control of the communists and most Catholics have been alerted to the terrible danger with which they threaten us. The interior enemy has no central authority, and is unorganized, because it is a negative sort of enemy. It is merely that much of the salt has lost its savor. Call it mediocrity, or secularism, or lukewarmness. If you wish to find an excuse, you can call it the gradual effects of the near-death blow which was the Reformation. But there is no particular point in finding excuses or allocating blame. And it goes without saying that the Church remains inviolable, and holy, at all times, no matter how much the surface is scarred. But if a Trappist in China has to suffer terrible tortures before death because people in America have not used the graces God has showered on them (and such a Trappist did so suffer, it being revealed to him that it was for this reason); and if cruel martyrdoms in Europe are a reflection of the tepidity of the masses of Catholics, then we cannot take comfort in the thought that the gates of Hell shall not prevail. Rather it is for us to discover how they have been able to lay such a heavy siege, and to meditate how best to lift it.

The Relationship Between the Two Enemies

The enemy without is the Devil's answer to the enemy within. Our arch-enemy is merely moving seven new devils into a void which we have swept, but which we have neglected to fill with vital Christianity. He is but satisfying humanity's yearning for Christ with a caricature of Christ. We are told that those who are not with Christ will be against Him. Our sin has been not to attack Christ, but to try to remain neutral for all practical purposes, and it turns out now that everything we touch is against Him.

We can ward off the direct attacks of the communists with ever more hideous martyrdoms and with the prayers and penances which only God knows how many hidden souls. We can stall occasionally by turning an election or forcing a diplomatic issue. We can only conquer communism by filling the void of our daily lives with Christ. The only permanent remedy is for the salt to regain

its savor. This is the Church's remedy, and although it is meant as a general call to a deeper, more sincere Catholicity, it is meant especially as a call to the apostolate, particularly the lay apostolate. If the salt has lost its savor, with what will the world be salted? It is a particular sort of recovery that we must make, a recovery of apostolicity and of the power of apostolicity. It is not a vague thing either. The purpose of this article is to discuss the general principles and technique involved.

The Indefensibility of the Status Quo

As a preliminary, let us make it quite clear that the status quo is indefensible. To champion mediocrity (under the name of prudence, of course), or the profit motive, or industrial capitalism or secularism, because these things are better than communism is like trying to fight pneumonia with a severe cold. All decent thinking economic philosophers agree that the economic platform of communism was provoked by the inherent injustices of the capitalist-industrial system (with its profit motive supreme). Karl Marx, the father of communism, said so. So did Max Weber, a brilliant German Protestant. So does Christopher Dawson, one of our outstanding Catholic historians. It is sad, then, to observe that so many Catholics think they defend the Church by defending liberal economics. It is precisely because liberal economics departs from fundamental Christian ideas about justice, property, usufruct and the common good, that it has sired such an unlovely child as Marxism. To an intolerable and unstable economic situation there are two alternative answers: either supersede the errors with even worse ones which look like correctives (as Marxism does), or return to Christian principles (as is the platform of Christian "radicals"). So, for instance, the answer to a grossly unjust distribution of property, is either to eliminate all private property, the state taking over (as in communism) or redistribute private ownership on a small scale (which is roughly the distributist platform). These two solutions differ from each other as night from day; they have in common only their mutual distaste for the laissez-faire ideal.

So it is all the way down the line. Take the case of marriage. The proponents of divorce say that it is a hideous and intolerable thing for a man and a woman to live together in hatred. And so it is. But there are two alternatives: one is to loosen the marriage bond, and the other is to develop the spiritual union between husband and wife by religious reinforcements all along the line.

No Catholic would defend the communist view of marriage, but many Catholics fail to see that the situation is parallel in the economic, political, spiritual and every other order. They ought to think more deeply and read their own great writers. They ought also to cease calling fellow-Catholics "communists" because they try to realize Christian doctrine in practice. The only defense against communism is a Catholicity lived, and that would be radical (which is to say it would go to the roots) in our day.

We are witnessing a widespread revolt against lukewarmness. Christ said "be ye hot or cold," but He didn't say that hot is cold; they are indeed at opposite poles. However, He preferred even the cold to the indifferent. The lukewarm are the ones He is going to spit out. And lukewarmness is precisely the religious temperature of the status quo. It has its intensities in greed and avarice, and pleasure, but it thinks it is a dangerous thing to love God too much.

The Function of the Laity

Today's crisis centers around the laity for the precise reason that the enemy is secularism. Our problem is not that God is absent from the churches, but that He is nowhere else. He isn't allowed in business, recreation, the professions, marriage, schools and politics. Christ has been thrust out of the *layman's* domain; hence the logical instrument by which He will be reinstated is the layman. That is the reason for the lay apostolate, which is not just another good thing, but is of supreme importance.

Because Protestantism denied the sacramental powers of the priesthood, the Catholic Church was forced to reemphasize the distinctive nature of the priest and for fear of misinterpretation placed no stress for centuries on the idea, which was current in early Christianity and is found in the Gospels, that the laity have a right to participate in analogous priesthood, deriving chiefly from the Sacrament of Confirmation. This doctrine is being revived in the Church in connection with the lay apostolate. It doesn't mean, of course, that there is not an essential difference of power and function between the laity and the clergy, but it does mean something. It means that the laity are capable of being formed into mature, apostolic, responsible Christians who can participate in *their own* initiative in the Church's apostolate.

Is it Dangerous to Give the Laity Initiative?

Many people fear the lay apostolate precisely because it does involve not a complete autonomy, but much more responsibility and initiative from laymen than in the immediate past. They say it will be dangerous to give the laity responsibility. It is true, I



The Formidable



of The Faithful

think, that it is dangerous to give the laity responsibility. Let us admit that, and then let us look at the problem more closely.

First of all, is it inappropriate to mention that life is dangerous, and particularly that Christianity is always courted by danger? An army would not get very far if it never took chances or suffered casualties. We would never have any saints if everyone stuck to the first stages of the spiritual life because there are so many possibilities of self-deception in contemplation. "Playing safe" is hardly a Christian attitude. God Himself has set another pattern by giving us free will, which is supremely dangerous to our salvation. We shall some day know how many "casualties" God has tolerated in this respect for the sake of a higher good.

So the question is not so much whether it is dangerous to give the laity responsibility but whether or not it is necessary. Whether or not it is the mind of the Church, whether or not they have the capacity to be fitted for it, despite the fact that some may not prove worthy.

Probably the reason that many are opposed to lay responsibility is that they imagine the disaster which would follow from giving responsibility to the type of lay person generally found in the Church today, dutiful and docile but immature in respect to his Catholicity. They remember the days of lay-trusteeship when lay people tried to dictate to the Church about matters belonging in the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, not realizing that the present situation is calling for laity to take *apostolic* responsibility in the *temporal* order, after they have been formed spiritually and intellectually under the clergy; without realizing too that the laity remain always under the *control* of and sometimes under the *direction* of the hierarchy (as in specialized Catholic Action where the laity exercise a limited initiative under general coordinating directives).

Again, it is not so much a question of whether the laity ought to be allowed to influence the temporal order or not; *they inevitably do so already*. The question is whether their influence will be for Christ or against Him, and, if for Him, whether or not it will be exerted in the most effective way. If you look around the United States you will see that almost everything has turned from Christ. The newsstands are crowded with trash, error and pornography. The stores are full of luxurious, poorly-made and immodest clothes. Almost all new housing invites the practice of contraception. The movie houses are full of movies which best ignore Christ. None can deny that Catholics are involved in every step of this Christ-less civilization. Nor is it any longer

sible to maintain that the Catholic contribution is a minor one, and that the thing to do is for Catholics to get in there at the bottom, work their way to the top, and then change things. There are Catholics at nearly all the tops, owning the greatest tabloids, controlling movie companies, directing newsstand syndicates, and being presidents of department stores. When is someone going to challenge their consciences? When are they going to learn that they must know in their hearts already, that as Christians they are bound by a higher law than current business ethics? Religious motivations won't teach them, and contributions to charities won't use them. If someone were to put the responsibility for reordering the temporal order squarely on their shoulders, where it belongs, then they would be challenged.

Another unfortunate effect of a passive laity is the temptation it presents to the clergy to step out of their spiritual domain. That is why trouble keeps popping up about priests "meddling" in politics, both here and abroad. That is why priests come up with solutions to the economic problem or get lost in a maze of secular administrative affairs. It hasn't happened often in this country yet, and it doesn't always end unhappily, but it is dangerous for a priest to be preoccupied with temporal problems. When a priest does so it is usually to do what the laity ought to have done but have left undone. It may seem strange to a future generation that we have seen a priest crusade against usury and other financial ills, yet we have had many Catholic bankers and a president of the stock exchange who have not even noticed any of these disorders.

The lay apostolate is the corrective for these troubles, because it develops a responsible, mature laity. The tragedy of most Catholics who are prominent in secular affairs is that they are spiritually midgets. It isn't a question of good or bad will. It is the Church no good to have men of good will in high places if they have not also good sense and Catholic minds. Even though in the former case they may do the Church favors or give her money, this does not outweigh the harm they do by seeming to put the Church's seal of approval on the activities in which they are involved.

The Concept of the Leaven

Society must be redeemed from inside. You hear the Young Christian Workers talking about being a leaven. They hope to work like yeast in the lump of dough. As through kneading the yeast is everywhere present in the dough, so through their temporal activities they are everywhere; in factories, offices, hospitals, pro-

fessions, sports and theatres. If they allow themselves to become leaven, by becoming instruments of Christ, the whole mass of people and institutions will be raised to Christ.

The idea of the leaven is pretty much common sense in the modern situation (the communists have it too but in a perverse way, "boring from within"). It is obviously suited to a lay initiative and it contrasts with the techniques used by the Church at the time of the development of the religious orders, the so-called "Dark Ages" during which the Church christianized Europe. The Christians weren't everywhere as they are today; the mass of people were barbarians, waiting to be converted and civilized. Far from being excluded from temporal activities, such as economics and politics, the Church had even to supply these things. Bishops sometimes being temporal as well as spiritual rulers. The Church had tremendous prestige and corresponding authority. The Church's method was roughly as follows: it withdrew a Christian elite (the monks and nuns) for special spiritual and intellectual training; these religious established monastic centers from which flowed Christian instruction as well as practical and intellectual training. Some two-thirds of the cities of France were organized around such a nucleus of integral Christianity.

Today's situation is the opposite. The Church enjoys particular prestige and has very little power to influence temporal society in an authoritative or ecclesiastical way. She cannot impose her principles of economics or politics and when she makes them known most of the world fails to listen (as witness the almost entire ignorance of papal encyclicals which prevails among non-Catholics, even in high places, not to mention among Catholics) or the failure of the U.N. lately to heed the Church's plea for internationalized Jerusalem). Catholics are everywhere today, opposed to formerly, but they aren't very Catholic.

So instead of the Church's being the center of society and working its influence outward, the Church remains on the periphery and works as a leaven through the laity who will restore the central position of Christ as King of this world as well as the next. Whereas formerly the religious and clergy were the chief apostles, with the laity assisting, now the laity are in the forefront with the clergy and religious forming the laity and controlling and directing them, not without, however, giving them the responsibility necessary to act prudently.

Errors To Be Avoided

Since the laity must leaven society they must be in society but if they conform to secular norms of conduct they will no longer

heaven. This dilemma is at the heart of the problem of the apostolate.

Some, seeing how much holiness is necessary to raise up a society as pagan as ours, have withdrawn the laity for intensive ritual and intellectual training according to the great masters of the contemplative life. Almost invariably the laity so trained find themselves alien to their former environments and so unable to influence society from within. However, they are usually zealous Christians and their projects, while on the periphery of society, will probably be very valuable in the future; meanwhile, their own holiness, self-sacrifice and dedication are certainly pertinent to the salvation of America.

Those who go to the other extreme are less fortunate because they end up sacrificing their own holiness to a misguided zeal for acting along. They are the people whom Cardinal Suhard commiserates in one of pastorals, who make sacrifice after sacrifice to win peoples' trust and friendship in order to bring them Christ, but find in the end that they have conformed so completely that they are empty-handed—they have only themselves to give.

The solution to the dilemma rests in formation. Anyone who ponders the Jocist method will be deeply impressed with its genius. In the first place the apostle does not seek his own perfection apart from his fellows. The see-judge-act inquiry technique is not an examination of personal conscience, but of social consciousness. It does not say, where have *I* sinned in a *formal* manner? It says, where have *we* sinned in a *material* way? Where are we unconscious pagans? It brings Christian light to bear on the immediate social circumstances. This method has the further virtue of insisting on action from the beginning, as this action is the occasion of the formation of the apostle himself in realistic charity. It manifests the need of a strong sacramental and prayer life, while not bottling grace up inside the soul. As Father Hessler has said, speaking of receiving frequent Communion, "whoever eats such powerful food needs a lot of exercise." He meant the exercise of charity in an apostolic way. The first fruit of Catholic action is the formation of the apostles themselves. It produces mature, responsible leaders who work on their environment, chiefly through a manifest charity.

The New Elite

For better or worse our society is in process of changing its leadership. On the side of worse we see the strong men of Europe, former house painters, soldiers or laboring men. Winston Churchill, the aristocrat leader, seems like the vestige of a former

day, and there is no need to mention the dispossessed monarchs of Europe, for they have completely lost their leadership. Our own congressmen and senators cannot all be characterized as "gentlemen," and F. D. Roosevelt may have been our last president to come from the landed gentry (whom he, in any case, "betrayed"). If you go into even the most conservative American cities you will see that the "better people" (the cultured, the well educated, those who have been wealthy for generations and who have been Americans for a long time) no longer are really in control, or else their control is threatened.

The communists would say that this is merely evidence of the impending dictatorship of the proletariat, and a good thing too. The dialectical resolution of history has destined that the working man will reign supreme.

The Church, on the contrary, does not hope that all men will be reduced to the dead level of industrial wage-earners. She prefers a society with economic, intellectual, and functional differentiations because that corresponds to the nature of men.

That does not mean that Christianity favors the present social structure. It would be hard to hold that the high positions of men in our society are by and large filled by the most competent and deserving. After all, we have been through centuries of secularism, within which society became progressively more corrupt. It would not be too much of an exaggeration to hold that the people we honor most are the richest; money does not so much follow position, as it buys position. Even many of the old families have unsavory first beginnings, as have been exposed in many a popular biography. It can be further held, I think, that most of the old-line leaders have forfeited their right to leadership. They have been like generals who hid while the battle was on. When inflation threatened the bankers suddenly became very interested in farming and bought up most of the farmland in the country as an ace in the hole. The men who built the great black factories which belch forth smoke on the children of their workers, have themselves long since moved to the suburbs where their own children are surrounded by greenery and solicitude.

To be a true leader of the people a man must first identify himself somehow with the people. No wonder Vito Marcantonio wins elections for he tells his constituents, poor tenement dwellers on the East Side of New York, that he and they share the same cockroaches. He reminds them that they don't have to go down to Wall Street to see him, as would be the case with his Republican opponent. No one is going to beat Vito Marcantonio by sitting

ound Tammany headquarters and accusing him of being a communist. Only another leader, a Christian who really is a leader, will be a serious rival.

What we need is not to sustain the old elite but to form a new elite, of Christian apostolic leaders. The "teams" who have gone into the slums around Paris first endeavor to "share the destiny" of the most underprivileged people and then to lead them from within. We must remember that Christ our Leader took our human nature and shared our destiny in order to redeem it. In imitation of Him we must accept the temporal destiny of those we propose to lead. That means that if people are insecure we must accept insecurity, if they are threatened with the atomic bomb, we must not run away.

The Mobile Unit

Quality, not quantity, counts in this revolution. The modern world is not going to be won by horse power but by strategy, and although the aim is to win the masses (by force or conversion) the standing army will be small, mobile and will consist of highly-trained leaders. If we were trying to hold up the strength of a society which was only slightly ailing it would be useful to give a little reinforcement everywhere. But we are trying to forge a new world quickly before the old one collapses and for that we need depth of vision, dynamism and key people who can lead the masses who are already too confused to think for themselves.

You do not get dynamism from watering down your doctrine to the level of the most complacent man. You get dynamism from the greatest possible fullness of truth and light, even if that is embodied in only a few people. Our Christian dynamism comes from Christ, of course, and it's better for gaining the world to have five people in a parish or town whose supernatural life is so intense that they really manifest Christ (especially in the market place, where it will always cause some sort of riot because it will confound ordinary business and social customs), than it is to have a whole township of mediocre practising Christians.

The lay apostolate is always characterized by small, dynamic working units, no larger than free-discussion size. In the Young Christian Worker movement they are called "cells." In this the lay apostles have copied the communists, who had the technique from Our Lord. Christ preached to the multitudes, but He gave most of His time to training twelve men who then set out in all directions to form other cells; and so Christianity developed, slowly at first, then spreading by geometrical progression until it took over the world. As long as the cells can grow organically,

as through teams and more cells and teams, with an international superstructure and central committees, a movement using this technique will be effective, capable of swift action, and will develop a constant stream of loyal leaders.

The Communist Party is small, even in Russia, and prefers to remain so. It does not hope to win the United States or England by winning a national election but by gradually perverting the institutions of society to its uses (and crippling those which would not conform) so that communism has but to move in on what it has already won. Against such tactics old-line politicians and economists are virtually helpless. One reason is that they work with unwieldy groups. Observe how often our own Congress has been rendered impotent to act by a simple manipulation of parliamentary procedure, even when it is only a case of partisan interest within the anti-communist body. Political meetings and labor union meetings today are always subject to communist disruption by a clever use of Robert's Rules, but note that the communist meetings are not conducted by the same method. Catholic labor schools are strong on teaching parliamentary procedure themselves to counterbalance the communists but that is a purely defensive tactic.

In the Church you see a parallel situation. Most church organizations are large and unwieldy, with the dose of Christianity appropriately watered down. They try to reach everyone, and that is probably why they end up having virtually no influence on anyone.

By contrast the lay apostolate uses the streamlined method of the cell movement. It is willing to start very small as long as it is free to be as dynamic as leadership development can make it. It is only after the leaders are trained that its influence multiplies—and then geometrically.

The Coming Mystical Age

The six best-selling, non-fictional books in America today are on religious topics. Trappist monks rival the latest bathhouse suit obscenities for space in the pages of *Life* magazine. Does this mean that America is turning Christian?

Not necessarily. What it means is that the great age of naturalism, rationalism, and secularism is about finished and that men are ready to swing completely into the opposite camp. The opposite camp is mysticism. Mysticism doesn't mean naturalism and ethics and social philosophy and apologetics, even though these are all good things. Mysticism means contemplative prayer, the supernatural life, the truths which are above reason, all the

acts of the Faith which have been hidden deep in monasteries and convents while life in the world was so barren, so unbeautiful, so scientific and statistical. The age of the eager beaver and the over-ambitious is coming to an end. Men begin to turn envious and envious eyes toward those who see what can't be counted and measured, toward those who love solitude and prayer rather than the life of the party.

Mysticism is a much more lofty thing than reason, but there is a false mysticism which is below reason and which hits a depth of evil undreamed of by the simple sinner. This false mysticism in its murky depths has been winning adherents for a long time. It would be naive to suppose that communism is simply materialistic. Communism is materialism raised to a mysticism and given a soul. One sees it in the misty light that comes into the eyes of those who dream of the classless society, of the perfect beatitude which they are going to establish here on earth. Freud raised sex to a mysticism. His lust is a transcendental lust, not like ordinary lust but containing within itself the fulfillment of all joys.

Both communism and the lay apostolate put their appeal on the mystical plane. If communism simply appealed to self-interest it could only enlist the tentative support of the worst people, but it does in fact attract the best blood, the young idealists, and they are willing to sacrifice themselves completely and blindly for the cause, without hope of reward. Communism talks a lot about equality and this too in sort of a mystical way. And work is imbued with an aura of holiness. And so on down the line.

In answer the Church must bring out its highest life and not the rules of the minimum observance. The lay apostolate must fight for the best. It frankly hopes for (and has already achieved in not a few cases) action as an overflow of contemplation. It is the heroic virtue and the love which is supernatural charity. When Canon Cardijn speaks to his Jocists he always emphasizes the "mystique" of the movement. The most menial work is nobled by its participation in Christ's redemptive campaign. And, of course, there is the living reality of Christ's Mystical Body, emphasizing itself in the bond among apostles.

This then is the level of battle: two mystiques facing each other, one above and one below reason. Perhaps we shall soon be fighting with all the supernatural help we can summon against principalities and powers. It will be terrible, but it will be wonderful too, for there will then be only one enemy and the Church will be purged of tepidity, showing her glory before men.

PETER MICHAELS

Reed in the Wind

Reluctant apostles and fellow travelers,
"What came you out to see?
A reed shaken with the wind?"
Look closely then, while
Great shafts of hot air of politicians,
Cold, biting winds of economists,
Twisting, devastating winds of pseudo-philosophers,
Frigid, paralyzing winds of fear
And violent, cyclonic winds of sin
Bow the reed to the ground.
Then, behold the miracle of miracles!
In the midst of the crosscurrent
The gentle, soothing breeze of sanctifying grace
Uplifts the reed and sustains it through the storm.

CLINTON O'NEILL

Some Notes on Lay Responsibility

Lay initiative and responsibility are not accidental to the lay apostolate. They are essential to it, stemming as they do from the virtue of prudence. Prudence is the rightful ruler of practical action and therefore of all action. Apostolic action, like every action, is particular in its object. Christian truth must be applied to a specific situation—the spiritual to the temporal. This requires a twofold competence: a spiritual competence, a temporal competence.

No one can properly apply one thing to another unless he knows both, namely, the thing to be applied and that to which it must be applied. . . . Therefore it is necessary that the prudent man know both the universal principles of reason and the particulars about which actions are concerned.—Saint Thomas (*Summa Theologiae*, II-II, 47, 3).

Someone has said that, while the clergy bring down the spiritual to the temporal, the mission of the laity is to take up the temporal into their hands and gradually to raise it to the spiritual. Certainly there is much truth in this dictum. The more the spiritual needs proclamation, the less heed is to be paid to mundane experience. The message comes from above, just as the Magnificat and the Beatitudes were announced from a mountain.

But wisdom about the infinite and unpredictable variety of persons and things comes rather from experience, from contact, not from above. It is necessary to search out the facts, even to recognize what has hardly been noticed before. Docility, the willingness to learn from others, is particularly necessary. All this Saint Thomas teaches us. Now the practical realities of life are grasped best by facing them, by living with them, above all by struggling against them. The more such reality enters an apostolic problem, the further the apostolate has to penetrate into the temporal order to do battle with secularism, the greater must be the Church's reliance upon the experience and initiative of her members. Understanding this, one easily understands the lay apostolate.

The apostolate always touches upon the temporal because only there can men be reached. For the most part the contact is within the area we know as *the pastoral ministry*, the field proper to the priest. Collaboration of the laity is needed even here, because of the multitudinous cares so often pressing upon the parish priest. Never should such praiseworthy efforts be minimized or disparaged. Yet it always remains a sphere in

which the priest's experience counts principally. His lay apostle will learn much from him. Their freedom of action will necessarily be greatly limited by his judgment and desires. The Legion of Mary, for example, or any other group that confines itself to the *pastoral* apostolate should rightly be so limited in autonomy. But quite different is the case of the apostolate within the area of *temporal institutions*. There it is a matter of temporal, even technical, "know-how," as well as orthodoxy in faith and morals. Above all, the apostle must have a recognized place in the sphere to be integrated with the spiritual, in order to act effectively within it. Obviously, with some few exceptions perhaps, it is not the priest, but the layman, upon whom the Church must rely. In his experience, his initiative, his devotion lies the hope of ultimate and complete integration. That is why the question of lay responsibility in the apostolate is a fundamental one, that must be answered clearly and honestly.

Lay Responsibility in Catholic Action

Catholic Action is not an ordinary lay apostolate. It is rather a lay apostolate within the official apostolate of the hierarchy according to the oft-repeated papal definition: "a participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy." The laity are given a part in the organized apostolate of the Church, committed as a subject to the hierarchy. A mandate from the Bishop constitutes the formal act of affiliation. The apostolic groups to whom this is given, even the subsidiary groups that come within its ambit, that fact share in the Bishop's apostolic mission and thus in a particular way become subject to his authority. Our present Holy Father has re-emphasized this point of late, in a letter to the hierarchy of India.

In so far as such activity is a direct collaboration of the laity in the spiritual and pastoral work of the Church, clearly it must be subordinated to the authority of the Bishops whom, under the jurisdiction of the Vicar of Christ, "the Holy Ghost has placed to rule the Church of God" in their respective dioceses.

This principle, he continues, is no less true of Catholic Action in its apostolate upon the temporal and social order.

In its social aspects also, where it may exert an impact on civil society, this sharing of the laity in the apostolic work of the Church must likewise be guided and directed by the hierarchy, which is for Catholics the competent authority regarding the moral implications of questions arising in the social-economic order.

Catholic Action depends directly and absolutely upon the hierarchy for its manner of organization, and above all for the principles that it enunciates. Not only must it avoid any deviation from official orders and pronouncements and from the common Catholic teaching in faith and morals, but it must further dedicate itself to the realization of the hierarchy's aims and teaching—to propagate far and wide the doctrine of the social encyclicals, for example; to expend every effort in any special campaign or endeavor. Catholic Action is an official arm of the Church. Therefore it should ever be in complete accord with the rulers of the Church and wholly coordinated with their actions and programs.

The guiding principle therefore of those who collaborate in this apostolate should be: *sentire cum Ecclesia*, to have the mind of the Church, to be intimately acquainted with the doctrine of the Church, which is "the pillar and the ground of truth" (Pius XII).

Catholic Action then may not propose its own peculiar doctrine. Nor may it pursue trends and objectives of its own choosing. Its entire *orientation* comes from the hierarchy, which, quote the late Cardinal Gasparri, is its "disciplinary center." Nevertheless, *as an organization*, Catholic Action must have autonomy in the field of execution. Individual members are not free to act as they please. There is a discipline over them. But it is a lay discipline, not a clerical one. The executive autonomy of Catholic Action is like that of the military in a state. The military is an instrument of the political authority, yet its plans and operations are not dictated politically. They are determined solely by military considerations and by military men. Similarly, Catholic Action must serve the hierarchy, but according to its own particular genius and initiative. It must truly be, what Pius XI said it was, a work for the laity, who have the direction and responsibility of their own organization.

The area thus left to lay initiative is by no means narrow. Lay officers will direct the activities of subordinates and even supervise their training, with due regard for the sustaining assistance of chaplains. Frequently the hierarchy will have to be alerted to changing needs within the milieu. Programs and actions must then be formulated to meet these needs. Always it will be the "lay" approach that will be used. Over and above the planned activity of his organization, the lay apostle of Catholic Action will often be confronted with the unexpected, with the situation that confounds and dismays. That is when he will have the chance to prove himself a responsible agent of the Church, when

he will have to rely solely upon his own prudence and strength of soul. His training in Catholic Action should be geared to such eventualities. Even dependence upon lay officers must not become a barrier to the development of true maturity in the members of Catholic Action.

Lay Initiative Outside Catholic Action

We should not believe that the activity of the laity in behalf of the Church is circumscribed by official Catholic Action. There is, for example, the personal apostolate of the zealous individual who may constantly go about doing good and yet remain outside the official apostolate. This complete abstention from the organized apostolate is never desirable in itself, because individual and isolated efforts are inadequate to meet modern needs. This is why the Popes have sounded the call to Catholic Action in all. But practical reasons may, in individual cases, dictate at least a temporary freedom from binding apostolic responsibility without an organization. Again, it may be that a suitable apostolic group is not yet available for membership. Of necessity, one must then confine himself to a personal apostolate.

The normal expression of direct lay initiative is the exercise of a concerted Christian influence upon *temporal institutions*, for example, the media of public opinion; political administration; social service, both public and private; public and private education; diplomacy; industry, labor and management. These and other social units are shaped and directed mainly through technical experience and skill that lie outside the spiritual order. Secular organizations and their administration, as Abbe Michonneau states, are not the business of the Church. But it is her business to fill these organizations with a Christian spirit, so that instead of impeding the realization of man's spiritual and moral objectives they actually serve that noble purpose. Catholic laymen, each in the sphere of his special competence, together with all men of like good will, must see to it that every purely temporal skill and technique for human well-being and progress ends not with itself but with God.

This integration of the spiritual with temporal institutions as such belongs, not to Catholic Action as such, but to the laity trained by it to know and apply the principles they have received. Here is the golden opportunity for the Catholic leader in every branch of endeavor. Thus will he demonstrate his maturity. Catholic Action can only rejoice when its members go forth on their own, with initiative and daring. It will bid them Godspeed and then await the reports of their accomplishments.

Does it therefore follow that the laity who embark on such undertaking free themselves from dependence upon the hierarchy and the clergy? To ask the question is to answer it. The Catholic layman will always depend on the teacher of divine truth and the dispenser of divine grace. Only thus will his efforts be supernatural and fruitful. Even in his apostolic maturity, in fact the more he works on his own, he must seek grace and truth without ceasing. Never should this dependence rest solely on personal ability or a sympathy of ideas and aims. It should rather be a devoted and humble attachment to the Pope as Pope, to the Bishop as Bishop, to the priest as a priest, and to the Church as Christ in the world today. There must be freedom of discussion within the Church, but with respect for the right of others to disagree without being less Catholic for doing so. There is room for many schools of thought, for divergent opinions, for varied approaches, for different programs. There is even place for controversy, but it must always take place with filial recognition of the teaching and governing authority of both the Pope and the bishops. The words of Saint Augustine have been quoted many times, but their truth lives on for every generation of Catholics: "In things necessary, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; but in all things, charity." There is no better norm for every lay apostle to follow.

REV. FRANCIS B. DONNELLY



NATURAL

PRUDENCE

Fatima and the Legion of Mary

Portugal and Ireland might be called humble nations. They are looked on as little countries, treated as unimportant in power and politics. They have not been wanted in the United Nations. Their citizenry is largely made up of people possessed of simplicity who have kept the Faith through the centuries and have not been verily deluded by the progress of the outside world. The humble men and women are God's favors. And each time He has manifested His will through His Holy Mother, either directly or indirectly, it has always been to those whose humility has made them child-like. Our Blessed Lady has favored both of these little nations, and it is possible to see a providential interrelation in these favors.

In 1917 in a simple cove near Fatima, Portugal, important apparitions of universal consequence took place; in 1921 in a humble backroom in Dublin, Ireland, the Legion of Mary came into existence. And during the succeeding twenty years, before the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima became generally known, the army of Our Lady was quietly spread to the five continents of the world, enlisting souls who would be consecrated to her work and who would in turn win others to her work of bringing the world to Christ.

Our Lady made three major requests at Fatima. If the requests were heeded, she promised that Russia would be converted and the great gift of world peace would follow; if unheeded, a terrible disaster would be inevitable. From its inception, the Legion of Mary was inspired to require of its members substantially the same things which Our Lady of Fatima demanded and from the beginning the Legion dared to hope to conquer the world. (One of its official prayers begins, "Confer, O Lord, on those who serve beneath the standard of Mary that fulness of faith in Thee and trust in her, to which it is given to conquer the world.") Let us consider how the Legion of Mary fulfills the three requests: that Christians should do penance; that the world (every diocese therein) should be consecrated to her Immaculate Heart; and that the Rosary should be recited devoutly, frequently, by increasing numbers.

Penance

In asking that Christians do penance, Mary especially calls for the sacrifices necessary for fulfillment of the duties of state and life and for the avoidance of sin. The Legion of Mary has as its primary object the sanctification of its members; personal sanctification is also its essential means of action—"personal service

g under the influence of the Holy Ghost." Through an
nsely ordered system, under ecclesiastical guidance, the Legion
ely cooperates "in Mary's and the Church's work of crushing
head of the serpent and advancing the reign of Christ;" per-
l holiness overflowing into apostolic work.

The new legionary soon learns, without any sermons, that
sacrifice goes hand in hand with the Legion system. Attending
weekly meeting (which, as the soul of the organization, must
precedence over all other activities the member once thought
ortant); carrying out the daily prayer requirement; and
orming the weekly work obligation in the spirit of Mary serv-
Christ—these are the disciplinary measures which teach the
nnings of self-sacrifice. As the faithful member grows in
nowledge and love of the Queen of Apostles, new vistas of the
ning of sacrifice are opened up to him. Developing the spirit
Mary demands a loving and wholehearted giving of self. A
bond of charity grows up between the members and embraces
e served. The Legion asks that service in its ranks be "a living
fice, holy, pleasing unto God . . . and not conformed to this
d." It asks members not to turn from labor and painfulness
to walk in love as Christ has loved us. It asks them to finish
course, to persevere unto the end, for nothing is ever hopeless.
Legionaries learn that personal sanctification and penance
inseparable. They begin to make the sacrifices necessary for
nsifying their spiritual life. Apostleship imposes the duty of
ng out to others," sacrificing everything necessary to reach souls.
e the Christian obligation of being an apostle has been grasped
ne legionary, very soon the ideal of reparation becomes part of
spiritual life. His own spiritual progress demands reparation,
sharing in the work of the priesthood, he sees souls in des-
te need—souls who will never be reached except through
erous reparation, as Our Lady of Fatima requested. He offers
o extra work. He gladly accepts disagreeable assignments
he *looks* glad when he accepts them!). He tackles a thankless
. He even gets the grace to rise above the closing of a door
is face. He simply "offers up" the chilly remarks of relatives
friends who complain of the Legion taking so much time. He
ns the need of supernaturalizing his own sufferings and of
hing this lesson to others: to the poor, the sick, the afflicted,
downtrodden, the spiritually undernourished—to all whom he
ts in his legionary rounds.

But the member also learns, quite early, something else of
t import. He discovers that there is a reward, even here and

now, for his "giving." He has a new joy, a new peace of soul. He begins to look forward to meetings, to his association with fellow members. None of the "old pleasures" (a movie for the sake of doing something) is as heartily satisfying as the purifying recreation that results from seeking God first. He finds that he prefers to be with those who are seeking God. An understanding exists between apostles which often never exists between those whose interests are more worldly.

So it is that the whole aim of the Legion in sanctifying its members brings them to a new joyful consciousness of their inseparable vocation as Christians and apostles. There follows a new fidelity to their daily duties. This in turn acts as a leaven in the community, bringing others through Mary, Mediatrix of Graces, to a realization of the hideousness of sin and to the fountain of grace.

The Rosary

"I am the Lady of the Rosary, and I have come to warn you faithful to amend their lives and ask pardon for their sins. They must say the Rosary." Thus, we are told, Our Lady spoke. And she told the children of Fatima to say the Rosary devoutly and frequently. At the very first gathering of that little group who formed Mary's Legion, the initial act was prayer: prayer to the Holy Ghost, followed by five decades of the Rosary. The Rosary was a part of the Legion before any other feature developed. As the Rosary became an official part of the Legion's prayers, so at every succeeding meeting has opened as did the first meeting. Active members are encouraged to say the Rosary daily. Moreover, the Legion seeks to enlist every practical Catholic as an auxiliary member, to say daily the Legion prayers including the Rosary. Since 1921 a network of praying "auxiliary" members has been gradually increasing in all parts of the world. Legion members are encouraged to belong to the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary, one of the most richly indulgenced confraternities in the Church.

The Rosary is at the same time very simple and very profound. To recite the Rosary properly is to grow in love of Our Lady; to grow in love of Our Lady is to learn from her the life of Our Lord and to penetrate the great mysteries therein. "It is characteristic of divine things to convey much by means of little. Thus the simple titles of the Mysteries of the Rosary confront the soul with the tremendous message of its redemption; they convey to the mind the whole plan of salvation in fullness of outline and depth of meaning" (*The Rosary and the Grain of Wheat*).

is Mooney, O.F.M.). The Legion devotion to Mary honors her as Our Mother and asks the legionary to dwell incessantly in the reality of Mary's motherhood of us. Through cooperation in the redemption, she became literally the spiritual Mother of us all. Meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary, and guided by the spiritual treasury of the Legion *Handbook*, the legionary seeks to a fuller realization of Mary's part in the redemption. At Fatima, asked for the devout recitation of the Rosary, mainly in order that mankind be brought to its knees once more acknowledging original sin, and in becoming little children in the company of Our Mother Mary and Our Brother Jesus.

Consecration to the Immaculate Heart

Our Lady's request for the consecration of the world to her Immaculate Heart is more specifically interpreted as the consecration of every diocese in the world by the respective Bishops. Pope Pius XII consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1942; the consecration of all the individual dioceses is still to be effected. Surely this will be brought about when an increasing number of persons throughout the world are individually consecrated to Our Lady and live that consecration. The Legion, turning its spirit on *The True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary* by Saint Louis-Marie de Montefort, asks its members to be consecrated totally to Our Lady and to live and work in complete dependence on her. This consecration is publicly renewed each year at its Acies Ceremony. The Legion prayers include the invocation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In honoring her as Mary Immaculate, the Legion recognizes in her Immaculate Conception the privilege which makes her all-powerful in crushing the head of the serpent. United with the Immaculate Virgin, legionaries wage her war against the forces of evil.

* * *

If we are meant to breathe Mary as life does air, then we must come to acknowledge our dependence on her, this "world-cherishing air" which leaves Christ's light "sifted to suit our sight." At Fatima, Our Lady clothed in light asked the Christian world to honor her. The reward she promised is the reign of her Divine Kingdom in this world. From Dublin, Our Lady's little army began its march in the company of her who is "terrible as an army set in battle array." The Legion relies upon Mary, the reflected light, "fair as the moon and bright as the sun" to lead all men, attuned to her love, to Christ—the Light of light.

MARY ISABEL EDELEN

BOOK REVIEWS

Sex

TWO IN ONE FLESH

By Rev. E. C. Messenger, Ph.D.
Newman, 3 volumes, \$7.50

Perhaps you can remember a slapstick that was used in Hal Roach silent-movie days, was always sure to provoke a la

The comedian would be walking down a street. Only the upper part of his comical figure would be shown on the screen. Suddenly he would start bobbing up and down in his stride and a look of growing alarm would appear on his face. He had become lame! Then the camera would slide down to include his feet and it would reveal that he had one foot on the curb and the other in the gutter. The attitude that has developed toward sex in the past four hundred years might be symbolized by this comical shot. Sex had been a thing fairly well under control and most people had learned to take it in stride. It was almost as natural and socially undisturbing as walking. Then, after the Reformation, it began to develop a limp. The reason for the limp was the same as that of the movie clown. It had one foot in the gutter. This second fall of Rome resembled the first in that it was followed by a ponderous sense of shame. Out of this shame came a vicious prudery which still exists in many quarters and especially among some Catholics. The perspective on sex, whether legitimate or sinful, seems to be drawn with one foot in the gutter. It has something about it of the indecent and the unclean. This attitude is defended on the basis that it is safer and nearer the truth than that of the promiscuous pagan contemporaries who have solved the limp by walking with both feet in the gutter. Obviously this isn't true, because although prudery might discourage licentiousness, it has irremediably evil effects simply because it endows its attitude with a quality of religious righteousness, and sets itself up as the standard of "purity."

The result has been that this generation of Catholic youth who newly-weds find themselves frequently between the devil of inhibited righteousness and the devil of uninhibited lust. Few things are more important than curing this limp if we hope to establish a critique of Christian marriage in our day. Written material that does justice to this subject is as rare as gold. This three-volume series by Father Messenger is a valuable step in the direction of establishing such a critique.

His first book (only fifty-six pages), introduces his thesis by investigating prudery and showing that it is quite unjustified in the light of the teachings of the Old and New Testaments, nor is it substantiated by empirical science or philosophy. He points out that prudery is not a product of old wives' tales but that it has been unfortunately supported by prejudiced scholars. A well-known textbook on moral theology describes the sex act as "a thing filthy in itself." He refers us to Genesius' *Institutiones Theologiae Moralis* in which the surprising statement is made that *indecent* acts are lawful for married people. By contrast with this one foot in the gutter attitude, we have the implicit and explicit teachings of Christ and Saints Paul, Augustine and Aquinas, in which legitimate intercourse is not only treated as naturally dignified but as a supernaturally sacred act when it is the normal consummation of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

His second book, on the mystery of sex and marriage, studies sex as manifest in the state of innocence of our first parents, after original sin, and the manner in which it is sublimated by grace as a result of Christ's redemption. With reverence and precision he treats of the sexual aspects of the Incarnation, noting the doctrinal emphasis placed upon the various aspects related to generation, conception, birth, virginity, circumcision, marriage, and so forth. The latter pages of this book develop a Christian anthropology of sex, dealing with such matters as the Sacrament of Matrimony, the place of sex pleasure and passion, the sense of shame, modesty, clothes and nudity. Also included is an index to the doctrine of Saint Thomas Aquinas on sex and marriage.

The third book, though far too brief, outlines the practice of sex and marriage. The material is condensed into sixty-five pages, the brevity somewhat compensated for by a select bibliography of related reading which appears in the back. His practical suggestions are not numerous but they concern the more poignant problems that plague the parent. There are suggestions on teaching children, and on the use of the sex act. I reluctantly add a few qualifications to my recommendation of these books. It is more than likely that some persons will believe that the attack upon prudery is somewhat out of date in these promiscuous times. This is not true. There are many Catholic wives who, due to ignorance or improper training, regard intercourse as vile and repulsive. There are just as many Catholic husbands who feel they are to some extent relieved by giving vent to normal and legitimate desires. Beyond this there is all of the social immodesty manifest by innocents who would be shocked if they knew the thoughts they provoked in the male audiences. Our Messenger handles this matter well and thoroughly. It must be said that his thesis is somewhat unbalanced in that direction. Although he praises continence and condemns promiscuity, I believe that this thesis tends to give the Devil his due when it comes to the sexual looseness and unbridled passions of our times. Indeed sex is a sacred thing, but it is one of the most difficult things to use in a reverent manner.

The ideal situation would be for these books to be read under the guidance of a spiritual director. This is not always possible, and although there may be some danger of misunderstanding there is not half the danger that comes from remaining in ignorance or accepting the prevailing standard that is shoved down our throats at every turn.

The final qualification I insert with the greatest reluctance, and it concerns the price of the volumes rather than their contents. Rare as are these books, though these books may be, I wonder if it is absolutely necessary that they be priced as highly as gold. For those who can afford them, they are worth the price, but it is a rare couple who can shell out \$7.50 these days. The fault lies not entirely with this publisher but should be equally distributed among all publishers, distributors and buyers of Catholic books, for so many excellent and vitally necessary works cost a sizable fraction of a week's pay. Basically the trouble seems to lie in treating the publication of truth quite casually as just another bread-and-butter proposition. Publishers are afraid to overprint good books. Distributors are afraid to stock. Retailers put them well behind prospective best sellers if not at the counter, and customers quibble about discounts. All of this increases the unit cost of the books. No one group concerned can solve the

quandary, but it is certainly about time that the matter be worked out that we may devise a Catholic apostolic distribution service that will result in no loss so that the spread of truth may gain.

ED WILLOCK

"Speech Is God's Gleeman"

GLEEWOOD

By Margaret Williams
Sheed & Ward, \$6.00

consider reading *Gleewood*. Frightened by the usual difficulties of reading Middle English and by long standing prejudices regarding the supposed "Dark Ages," I fear many people will not consider reading *Gleewood*. Their loss will be considerable, for the writings of the period between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries have a delicacy and simplicity that have not been equaled. Mother Williams has compiled a truly fine book with a delightful selection of poetry, prose, and drama in modern English, her own excellent commentaries, and prefaces that are superior to anything I've recently seen. Anyone who loves good writing, but especially writing permeated with Christianity, should read *Gleewood*.

BARBARA PHELAN

Christ and His Inverted Image

COMMUNISM AND CHRISTIANS

By six authors, from the French
Newman Press, \$2.50

Too much superficial criticism is made of communism. It is wrong philosophically, yes. It is wrong economically, yes. It never works, of course not. It can't last, or flourish or spread—but it does. Here is a book which goes much deeper. It is a symposium of essays by Francois Mauriac, Pere Ducattillon, O.P., Alexandre Marc, Nicholas Berdyaev, Denis de Rougemont, and Daniel-Rops, examining the success of communism against a background of the failure of Christians; not the failure of Christianity, but the failure of Christians.

There does not seem to be any comparably informed or profound discussion of communism here in America. Douglas Hyde in England has recently done a splendid pamphlet and book, very clearly written (simpler and clearer than some of the philosophical parts of this collection), but the thing is much plainer against a Christian background here. These essays are especially frank and penetrating. They are very sharp in their repudiation of capitalism, for one thing, but they don't make the mistake of going along with communism unconsciously. You will not find them accepting the communist platform point by point until they are virtually in the Marxist camp. They avoid this by always seeing the problem on the spiritual level, where it really rests. Daniel-Rops (whose essay I liked best of all) sums up the general point of view when he says (communism) destroys the unity of man, of human society; it monstrously opposes masses of men one against the other. And the very effort it proclaims towards a class-less humanity, towards a union, is, as it were, the inverted image of Christian unity in charity, the demoniacal projection in the mirror of hatred of the Christian effort to establish unity.

CAROL JACKSON

Seeds of Consternation

S PERVERSE GENERATION

Peter Michaels
ed & Ward, \$2.75

With the nation's best seller list featuring more and more Catholic books and many a lurid novel languishing unread at the

use of the confessions of a Trappist monk, it is evident that people e they have problems which a couple of aspirin and a good rest not fix up.

This Perverse Generation, far from inducing a restful night, may lead omnia in some of us for it is one of those forthright embarrassing nes that pins the blame for today's mess right where it belongs—on lves.

The author's thesis is that modern man, entrusted by Almighty God the proximate guiding hand in the universe, has by a tragic juxtaposi- of values made himself subject to all the rest of creation—matter, y, machines, the Devil. We have made the natural order, good as the standard by which the supernatural is judged.

This, in brief, is the message of Peter Michaels—a message served salt and bitters to shock our sick palates and restore the sense of

In the social, economic, political, educational and recreational fields ple is piled on example with inescapable logic until you are forced claim: "That's true! Why didn't I see it that way before?"

Just how have we gone wrong, specifically?

The Architect's plan calls for a vocational order, but we have substi- mere job-getting. The plan calls for an unlimited number of citizens eaven, but we have neatly altered that to mean we should have just any children as we can afford college educations. The plan calls for to reach their perfection through creative work, but we have invented ad an industrial order that despises the individual and laughs at what an hands can accomplish by themselves. The plan calls for an inten- apostolicity, but we hope to convert souls by superficial piety.

What appears now to be a nice structure combining the best features hristianity and secularism will prove, upon reading this book, to be gly facade hiding guilty concession, secret sin, mediocrity and pleasure- ersion.

And so it is no wonder that, trying to go along peaceably with an e that is irreconcilable with God's order, we suffer strange and terrify- ocial and spiritual maladies.

Yet who is there to save us from this corruption? Who is not kept t by some shameful compromise in his own conscience? Everywhere ee smiling faces reassuring us that there is no essential warfare between standards of Christ and those of the world.

"Philosophy," said Saint Augustine, "is to plough and harrow the d for the reception of the word of God."

Today we must have a Peter Michaels with the cold blade of irrefut- reason to plough and harrow our complacency, to lacerate our pride, rike with an impact sharp enough to shatter our false standards. It t be painful treatment to match the virulence of the disease.

This is exactly the purpose which *This Perverse Generation* fulfills so . Its direct, deadly, concise analysis of the situation, executed with

the author's increasingly deft sureness of style, will begin to ransom from the slavery of our liberalism and restore us to the freedom of sons of God.

ELIZABETH M. SHEEHAN

How Do You Start C. A.?

THE MYSTICAL BODY IN ACTION

By Rev. Bernard F. Meyer, M.M.

The Center for Men of
Christ the King, Herman, Pa.

Price: \$1.00

Many parish priests and apostolic parishioners have desired for these many months to get C. A. started in their parishes. They have been held back by their reluctance

start the snowball rolling until they are quite sure that they can get under control.

Father Bernard Meyer of Maryknoll has gone to bat for just such people as these and come up with an excellent little work-book of parish Catholic Action. A complete program for a year is mapped out with an outline of studies, inquiry and action, and prefaced with a few suggestions as to how to get the whole thing started. This handy book represents a good deal of first-rate work and to any pastor or curate or even a layman with the "go ahead" signal, it definitely will be a godsend.

ED WILLOCK

Positive Health

NUTRITION AND THE SOIL

By Dr. Lionel James Picton, O.B.E.

Devin-Adair, \$4.00

The sight of a pasty-faced adolescent member of Our Lady Sodality sipping Coca-Cola and munching Ritz crackers shows

ajar upon the integral sense of Christians. So should "boughten" white bread on the hospitable table of convents and monasteries. Food robbery of its vital elements is the counterpart in a lower order of spiritual robbery without grace.

The crusade against denatured food is beginning to break out in an open, after many heroic years in near-obscurity. The American Medical Association will some day have to answer for its silence. So will the legislators for their acquiescence. So will the publishers and newspapermen which conspired to keep exposees on the semi-secretive level, privately printed or issued by little-known institutes. It's so easy to label "crackpot" ideas which do not circulate in popular arenas. Meanwhile, Peppridge Farm Bread which *really* is bread becomes phenomenally popular on the East Coast while our corrupt economic ways keep up the elaborate pretense that it doesn't even exist. Meanwhile, too, women have no carriages, or quarrel with their husbands, because they lack the vitality to cope with circumstances of modern life, and another hundred thousand Americans slip into mental disease because their frayed nerves and exhausted bodies can't stand up against the strain of work or family life any longer. What a reckoning there will be in heaven.

Nutrition and the Soil is the latest in a series of books exposing the truth about positive health (the sort that does not have to take vitamin pills and patent medicines). Those who have read the others will find this very interesting. Those who have never tackled the subject should better begin, and here is a better place than most.

The thesis is that if we were really healthy we would have a natural immunity to most diseases. This vital health depends chiefly on a proper balance of elements in the body, which in turn depends on the eating of whole (unprocessed) foods grown in soil which has been organically fertilized.

Dr. Picton's book is full of examples, illustrations, experiments, stories, and recipes. Since he is a medical doctor it stresses the medical aspects, particularly in relation to child-bearing. It makes fascinating reading and a good rounded presentation of the subject.

PETER MICHAELS

Daily Mass Guide

VINE AND BRANCHES

Vol. 1, VINE

By Martin B. Hellriegel

Pio Decimo Press

St. Louis, Mo., \$4.00

Monsignor Hellriegel, the author, might well be called the Pius Parsch of this country. Like the famous Viennese protagonist of the liturgy, the St. Louis pastor isn't content with just writing academically about the liturgy; he has laboriously

flowed through by making his parish one that actually lives the liturgy.

Vine and Branches, which is volume one, each day's Mass during the temporal cycle of the Christian year, is made the subject of simple, yet profound and eager meditation. Reading it tonight in preparation, your Mass tomorrow morning in your missal will unfold and reveal many precious things with which the mysteries are jewelled.

A. J. R.

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MURIEL ZIMMERMANN, Dean

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DOM HUBERT VAN ZELLER

ON HEALTH:

"There are some things which would be so incongruous on the lips of the saints that the very sound of them should shame us into silence. 'Not if it's raining, if you don't mind: you know how liable I am to chills.' 'But that would mean spending the night in the station.' 'I think another day in bed—just to be on the safe side.' Yet we make these frightful remarks on the smallest provocation . . . when perhaps we are missing the chance of relieving another's mental suffering, when we might be bringing the light of the Gospel to someone who has been nerving himself for weeks to ask us about the Faith . . ."

ON PRAYER:

"There is nothing to show that our prayers are as boring to God as they feel to us."

We could go on giving you bits of **Dom Hubert van Zeller's** book **WE DIE STANDING UP** (\$2.00) indefinitely, but you can make a guess from these scraps that it is the sort of down-to-earth spiritual writing you would expect from a Benedictine who says he "cannot bear stuffy spiritual books." If INTEGRITY readers don't love it, we will eat the whole edition.

We think the author and **Peter Michaels** should meet. You have, we suppose, read his **THIS PERVERSE GENERATION** (\$2.75) by now. (It's been out five weeks.) If you opened it in a bookstore you almost certainly took it home. The first sentence: "It pleases me that the communists keep nipping at the vulnerable spots of what was once Christendom, outraging us now by an atrocity, now by a major theft. It shows that God has not abandoned us to our complacency."—gives what an ad writer might (with justice for once) call a "delightfully different" view of communism. But who are we to be telling you how Peter Michaels writes?

If you have any problems coming up in the way of Ordination Graduation or Wedding presents, don't forget that Sheed & Ward have special **GIFT CERTIFICATES** for all such occasions. We will fill one in for any amount you send from a dollar up, and send it off for you with a general catalog listing and describing more than 250 books—quite a choice.

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